

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH ABOUT COMPLAINING?

A Bible Teaching by Jack Hartman

November, 2016

I believe that many Christians do not know and understand what the Bible teaches about complaining. Many people who complain do so because of what they believe is righteous indignation. They believe they have been wronged and that they have every right to complain. This makes sense from the world's perspective. However, as you soon will see, God does not want us to complain about anything. (All of the following Scripture references are from *The Amplified Bible*.)

THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT, WHENEVER A PERSON COMPLAINS, THIS PERSON ACTUALLY IS COMPLAINING AGAINST THE LORD.

The following words that Moses spoke to the Israelites many years ago also are God's words to you today. "...the Lord has heard your grumbings which you murmur against Him..." (Exodus 16:8)

God wants all of His children to fully understand that, whenever we complain about anything, no matter how justified this complaint might seem to us, we actually are complaining against Him. Please highlight or underline the words "against Him" in this verse of Scripture. These words refer to the complaints that the Israelites made when they were in the wilderness. They also apply to each of us today.

GOD IS DISPLEASED WHENEVER WE COMPLAIN ABOUT ANYTHING.

"...the people grumbled and deplored their hardships, which was evil in the ears of the Lord..." (Numbers 11:1)

God looks at complaining as "evil." He was not pleased when the Israelites complained in the wilderness. As we proceed with this teaching, you will learn exactly what God instructs you to do. whenever you are tempted to complain about anyone or anything.

GOD ALWAYS EMPHASIZES BY THE USE OF REPETITION. HE REPEATEDLY TELLS US THAT HE DOES NOT WANT US TO

COMPLAIN. "Do all things without grumbling and faultfinding and complaining [against God]..." (Philippians 2:14)

Please note the words “all things” at the beginning of this verse. Please note that the amplification at the end of the verse uses the words “against God.” God wants each of His children to obey the following instructions that will help you whenever you are tempted to complain.

JESUS CHRIST HAS GIVEN YOU A TOTAL, COMPLETE, AND ABSOLUTE VICTORY OVER ANYTHING THAT YOU MIGHT BE TEMPTED TO COMPLAIN ABOUT. Jesus said, “...In the world you have tribulation and trials and distress and frustration; but be of good cheer [take courage; be confident, certain, undaunted]! For I have overcome the world. [I have deprived it of power to harm you and have conquered it for you.]” (John 16:33)

Please notice the words “be of good cheer” in this verse. If you really believe that Jesus Christ has “overcome the world and deprived it of power to harm you,” why would you ever complain about anything? Jesus instructs you to “be of good cheer” whenever you face any difficult problem. The amplification immediately after these words encourages you to be “confident” and “undaunted.” If you really *believe* that Jesus Christ *has* “overcome the world,” you will rejoice in the face of adversity instead of complaining.

Every statement in the Word of God is completely reliable. God always does what he promises to do (see I Co 1:9). Refuse to focus on any problem that you face. Instead, whenever you are tempted to complain, rejoice in the total, complete, and absolute victory that Jesus Christ won for you when He rose victoriously from death.

JESUS CHRIST WILL ALWAYS LEAD YOU IN TRIUMPH. “...thanks be to God, Who in Christ always leads us in triumph [as trophies of Christ's victory]...” (II Corinthians 2:14)

Please highlight or underline the words “always leads us in triumph” in this verse. God does not say that He will lead you in triumph sometimes or most of the time. He says that He *always* will lead you in triumph.

If you are tempted to complain about anything, meditate on this verse and other verses of Scripture in this month's teaching. No matter how justified

you may feel, refuse to complain about anything. “He who guards his mouth and his tongue keeps himself from troubles.” (Proverbs 21:23)

CENTER EVERY ASPECT OF YOUR LIFE AROUND GOD. GIVE HIM THE ABSOLUTE REVERENCE AND AWE THAT HE DESERVES. “Let all the earth fear the Lord [revere and worship Him]; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.” (Psalm 33:8)

“All the inhabitants of the world” are instructed to “stand in awe” of God. Your Father instructs every person on earth to fear Him and revere Him. If you fear God and revere Him, your life will be centered around Him. You will trust Him completely. You will not focus on anything that you might be tempted to complain about. “In the reverent and worshipful fear of the Lord there is strong confidence...” (Proverbs 14:25)

JESUS CHRIST HAS GIVEN YOU SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS THAT TELL YOU HOW TO REACT WHENEVER ANOTHER PERSON TREATS YOU UNFAIRLY. Jesus said, “...love your enemies, treat well (do good to, act nobly toward) those who detest you and pursue you with hatred.” (Luke 6:27)

Instead of complaining if someone treats you unfairly, God instructs you to love every person, regardless of what this person does to you.

GOD NEVER INTENDED FOR YOU TO LOVE PEOPLE WHO ARE VERY DIFFICULT TO LOVE WITH YOUR INADEQUATE HUMAN LOVE.

“...God's love has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit Who has been given to us.” (Romans 5:5)

If Jesus Christ is your Savior, you received the Holy Spirit at the time that you were saved (see Romans 8:9). At that time, God pours His supernatural love into your heart.

LOVE PEOPLE WHO ARE VERY DIFFICULT TO LOVE WITH GOD'S LOVE THAT IS IN YOUR HEART. “...Love (God's love in us) does not

insist on its own rights or its own way, for it is not self-seeking; it is not touchy or fretful or resentful; it takes no account of the evil done to it [it pays no attention to a suffered wrong].” (I Corinthians 13:5)

Do not be resentful. Refuse to react negatively regardless of how any other person treats you. God's love in your heart is *more than sufficient* to cope with whatever any person does to you at any time.

THANK GOD NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS TO YOU. “Thank [God] in everything [no matter what the circumstances may be, be thankful and give thanks], for this is the will of God for you [who are] in Christ Jesus...” (I Thessalonians 5:18)

Your Father instructs you to thank Him “in everything no matter what the circumstances may be.” If you are absolutely certain that Jesus Christ has given you a total victory over every problem you will ever face, do not complain. Instead, thank God for your certainty that He will *always* give you victory. “...thanks be to God, Who in Christ always leads us in triumph [as trophies of Christ's victory]...” (II Corinthians 2:14)

GOD WILL TAKE CARE OF PUNISHING ANY PERSON WHO HARMS YOU. HE DOES NOT WANT YOU TO ATTEMPT TO PUNISH PEOPLE YOURSELF. “Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave the way open for [God's] wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is Mine, I will repay (requite), says the Lord.” (Romans 12:19)

These words that the apostle Paul wrote to the Christians in Rome also are God's instructions to you today. God tells you that you should NEVER avenge yourself. Trust God to take care of the punishment. God will always do His part. People will pay for what they do. God wants you to do your part. Love every person at all times with God's love that is in your heart regardless of what any person has done to you.

If you can even begin to comprehend how badly you hurt yourself when you complain, you will not complain. You will always react with absolute faith in God whenever you face any circumstance that would seem to give you just cause for complaining. Instead of complaining, no matter how justified your complaint might seem to be, thank God and praise Him. *Know* that He will bring you through every problem you face.